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VA Puget Sound Health Care System  
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May 5, 2006

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## NEWS RELEASE

### **King County Joins with the VA and HHS to Focus on Diabetes, Obesity and High Blood Pressure Among our Citizens Get Right, Live Right and Get Healthier!**

Seattle, WA. On Saturday, May 13, 2006 the public is invited to join the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services as we launch the HealthierUS/HealthierUS Veterans programs with King County Steps to Health. This innovative partnership between federal and local/regional agencies will kick off events aimed at the growing rates of obesity, diabetes and high blood pressure in America.

Keynote speakers from both agencies as well as Steps to Health King County will address the role of health, wellness, nutrition and fitness as part of a healthy lifestyle. Free health screenings for diabetes and high blood pressure, cholesterol screening, diet and nutrition counseling and fitness advice will be available at VA Puget Sound Health Care System and at the Columbia City Walks events. The program kicks off Saturday morning, May 13, 2006, at 9:00 a.m. at the Seattle Division of VA Puget Sound Health Care System, 1660 South Columbian Way, Seattle, WA 98108. Parking and assembly will occur in the south parking lot, reached from Columbian Way by taking the first right turn off of the main drive into the facility.

VA Puget Sound Health Care System and the Department of Health and Human Services in partnership with: King County Steps to Health; Public Health - Seattle & King County; University of Washington Health Promotion Research Center; City of Seattle Parks and Recreation Department encourages veterans, residents of Beacon Hill, Columbia City and Georgetown to attend. Following the kick off, teams will walk one mile from VA Puget Sound Healthcare System to the Columbia City Walks and Merchant Fair.

The Columbia City event will begin at 10:30 a.m. with opening remarks by King County Executive Ron Sims; the event runs through 1:00 p.m. Historical loop walks through the neighborhood will provide opportunities to stop and get "passports" stamped at various venues. Activities include health education seminars at businesses and fitness demonstrations in Columbia Park and Orca Playfield. Walking tours and activities will make this a fun, family event to get participants "moving." Courtesy VA shuttle service to and from the medical center and Columbia City will assist those who need assistance. Agency employees, family members, community members, veterans and our neighbors are encouraged to participate. If you have additional questions, please call Dave Tostenrude at (206) 768-5381. We look forward to seeing you.

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